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I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. VI, NO. 42 OCTOBER 27, 1958 101 WASHINGTON, D. C. 15 CENTS

Some Observations on the Synagogue Bombings

1. Since January 1, 1957, there have been 83 bombings, achieved or attempted, against schools, churches, homes of Negro leaders and synagogues. But since most of the bombings affected Negroes, scant attention has been paid them. Not until the recent synagogue outrages (eight this year) did the President order the FBI to act. "After all," as they say down South, "a Jew is a white man." The tardy reaction, the absence of initiative by the Justice Department, reflects the extent to which the Negro is regarded as a second class citizen, and attacks upon him taken for granted.

That "Confederate Underground"

2. These bombings seem to have a twofold origin. One is psychotic imitation. The other is a "Confederate underground." This may not number more than a few hundred men, the wilder fringe of the Citizens' Councils and the Klan. But experience elsewhere has shown how dangerous a handful of terrorists may become when their activities are more or less approved in the region in which they operate; we do not want an Algeria on our doorstep.

3. To say that the Federal government has no authority to act is the subterfuge of the reluctant. There is a law which forbids the shipment of explosives across State lines. There are the Civil Rights statutes; under them, as the Supreme Court said in *Collins v. Hardyman* seven years ago, even a conspiracy of private persons is liable to prosecution where "of such magnitude and effect as to work a deprivation of equal protection of the laws." There is a law against seditious conspiracy framed to deal with incipient rebellion (and not like the Smith Act merely with ideas). The mere announcement of large-scale FBI investigation would itself be a deterrent. Even if the FBI does not find a basis for Federal action, it can—as in kidnapping cases—turn over evidence to State authorities for prosecution. The trouble is that until the synagogue bombings, the White House has not been sufficiently interested.

Any FBI Men in the Klan?

4. The head of the FBI has been almost apologetic in discussing its meagre civil rights activities with Congress. Though J. Edgar Hoover is constantly making statements on the dangers of Communism, he rarely if ever touches on the dangers of racism. He is scathing about "do-gooders" and "pseudo-liberals" and in his appearance earlier this year before the House Appropriations Committee on the 1959 budget waxed emotional about the way in which the courts allow "vicious hoodlums" to escape "merely because of procedural errors," a theme which fell pleasantly on Southern ears. But he shows no such heat about the bombings. One difficulty in solving them is that the authorities seem to know so little about the hate organizations which are their breeding ground. Mr. Hoover has a network of informers; he told the House Committee he had "approximately 150 known, or suspected, Communist-front and Communist infiltrated organizations under investigation," including organizations which "hypocritically bar Communists from their membership, but seek to discredit all persons who abhor Communism . . ." It is time to ask him how many racist groups the FBI has under surveillance.

Southern Cops Themselves Racist

5. Among the worst racists in the South are the police officials themselves. Gunnar Myrdal in his monumental study of the Negro problem, "An American Dilemma," reported that in many Southern towns "almost anyone outside of the penitentiary who weighs enough" can become a policeman. He also reported, "More than half of all Negroes killed by whites, in both the North and the South, were killed by police." Such killings are often a legalized form of lynching. The extent of this problem was indicated by the figures Mr. Hoover gave the House Committee on civil rights cases handled the year before by the FBI. Of a total of 1,289, there were 1,062 which involved "1,921 law enforcement officers." Of these police cases, 1,003 had been "closed." There had been only 12 indictments and one conviction. The police seemed to fare better than their victims.

Their Common Obsession

6. A familiar feature of Fascist movements everywhere are the secret chords of sympathy they strike with the police. So it is with racism in the South. Stan Opotowsky in a fascinating dispatch from Atlanta in the *New York Post* of October 21 quotes an unnamed Southern Mayor as saying, "Much as I hate to admit it, you must realize that many of our policemen get a vicarious delight from these bombings . . . A generation ago many of them were members of the Ku Klux Klan. Today many are members of the White Citizens Councils." Birmingham's police commissioner—Eugene (Bull) Connor—is a leading anti-Semite. A Jacksonville, Fla., policewoman, has been wowing the White Citizens Councils with a lecture on how, after the schools were integrated in Washington, Jewish women began having Negro babies. A Jacksonville detective, looking for bomb clues, told Opotowsky he suspected the NAACP and the Communists. Similarly the FBI chief told the House Committee how Communists were infiltrating Negro organizations "to take advantage of all controversial issues on the racial question." The notion that the Negro's desire for full acceptance as a fellow human being is a plot, whether by Communists or Jews or Catholics, is an obsession the police have in common with the racists.

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It Will Soon Be Too Late to Stop the Spread of Nuclear Arms to Irresponsible Powers

Ireland's Foreign Minister Pleads at the UN for Action Now

Jack Raymond's exclusive story in the New York Times Oct. 20 that the Pentagon is favorably considering Franco's request to transform his army into "a pentomic-type force, i.e. for atomic war" lends urgency to the speech made by Ireland's Foreign Minister, Frank Aiken, in the UN General Assembly October 17 calling for action to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to other nations. We reprint here the heart of his speech, which was given scant notice, and the text of his two resolutions. We urge letters to the U.S. delegation at the UN in support of the Irish initiative.

"As this Assembly, and the Great Powers represented in it, are unable speedily to abolish nuclear weapons completely, they ought at least to take steps aimed at preventing the threat from becoming even greater. It is a great tragedy that the Baruch proposals were not accepted and implemented 12 years ago. If we do not soon succeed in limiting the number of states making or possessing nuclear weapons the problem of saving the world from nuclear destruction may well have passed beyond the power of man to solve long before another 12 years have passed.

"The danger of nuclear weapons seems likely to increase in geometric progression. Those who now possess nuclear weapons are a few great and highly developed states, with great urban populations, with much to lose and little to gain in a nuclear war. As in the case of every other military invention, however, the harnessing of nuclear energy for military purposes is bound to become simpler and cheaper with the passing of time. Sooner or later this weapon will pass into the hands of states with much less to lose. Furthermore, as it comes into their hands, it may give them a temporary but enormous advantage over their adversaries, an advantage which they will be sorely tempted to exploit.

Suppose Syngman Rhee Got the Atom Bomb?

"We can all think of several regions of the world where fierce antagonisms exist, held in suspense only by a kind of truce or deadlock. That truce, that deadlock, could be broken all too easily, if one side or the other possessed nuclear weapons. Furthermore, nothing except international measures to prevent the dissemination of such weapons can prevent them from coming, ultimately, not merely to small and poor states but also to revolutionary organizations. And since local wars and revolutions almost always involve some degree of Great Power patronage and rivalry, the use of nuclear weapons by a small state or revolutionary group could lead, only too easily, to the outbreak of general war. One obsolete, Hiroshima-type bomb, used by a small and desperate country to settle a local quarrel, could be the detonator for world-wide thermonuclear war, involving the destruction of our whole civilization.

"There remains the argument, seldom actually stated, that for a country to abjure these weapons while others possess them involves a sacrifice of prestige. We think that argument is based on a false idea of how prestige—the good opinion of mankind—is likely to be won today. True prestige, it seems to us, will now be won, not by those who may press their way into the nuclear club, but by those countries which possess the skill and resources necessary to produce nuclear weapons but which, by deliberate choice, and in the interests of peace, refrain from producing them.

"The second objection concerns the supposed impairment of alliances. No nuclear power has in fact yet found it necessary for the effective working of an alliance to place its nuclear weapons in the control of a non-nuclear ally. The reasons why they have not done so are plain. Military pacts cannot in their nature be absolute and permanent.

"But the objection which I am now considering against these proposals does imply that, in certain circumstances, and to secure some military advantage, nuclear powers would consider handing these weapons over to non-nuclear allies. That very possibility seems to us a danger against which we should provide by international agreement now. Let us grant that it may at some time appear militarily advantageous to give these weapons outright to allied forces, rather than keep them stored in the control of military units belonging to the nuclear power itself. Is not the sacrifice of that hypothetical military advantage well worthwhile if it can secure the actual and enormous collective advantage of checking the dissemination of nuclear weapons?"

The Irish Amendment

Introduced in the UN General Assembly Oct. 17 would add to the Western resolution (for a discontinuance of nuclear tests while the coming Geneva talks are in progress) the following:

"Recognizing further that the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons could jeopardize progress towards these aims,

"Urges that the parties involved in these negotiations shall not supply other States with nuclear weapons while these negotiations are taking place and during the period of any suspension of tests that may result therefrom;

"Urges further all States which are not now producing nuclear weapons to refrain from undertaking their manufacture while these negotiations are taking place and during the period of any suspension of tests that may result therefrom."

Text of the Resolution by Ireland to Prevent New Atomic Powers from Emerging

"The General Assembly, 1. Recognizing that the aim of the United Nations in the field of disarmament is an effective general agreement on the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction which will provide for the cessation of the production of such weapons, the destruction of existing stocks and the progressive limitation of conventional armaments,

"2. Recognizing further that the danger now exists that an increase in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons may occur, aggravating international tension and the difficulty of maintaining world peace and thus rendering more difficult the attainment of the general disarmament agreement envisaged in paragraph 1,

"3. Decides to establish an ad hoc Committee to study the dangers inherent in the further dissemination of nuclear weapons, and recommend to the 14th session of the General Assembly [next year] appropriate measures for averting these dangers."

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Evidence Which Contradicts Dulles's Denial of Blockade Activities "In Recent Months"

Some New Light on the Strange Story of the Chinese Offshore Islands

Krishna Menon at the UN has said that the Communist shelling of Quemoy which began on Aug. 23 was a reaction to provocative action from the offshore islands. On the other hand, Secretary Dulles on Oct. 15 in effect denied this. "Actually," he said at press conference that day, "little, if anything, has been done from these islands in recent months to make them a thorn in the side of peace. They have not been used to blockade the ports of Amoy or Foochow. They have not been staging commando raids or trying to infiltrate agents from them. I think the situation in that respect can be clarified, but there is not a great deal to be done."

This answer provided a glimpse of the kind of aggressive activity which has made Nationalist possession of the offshore islands "a thorn in the side of peace." Blockade, commando raids, infiltration of agents . . . these were specified by the Secretary, and he hinted that something might be done to "clarify" this situation, whatever that may mean. His assertion that there had been no blockade activities "in recent months" seemed to be supported by a statement which the Chinese Nationalist Defense Ministry issued the following day in Taipeh. It said a 9-year old blockade of the port of Amoy, opposite Quemoy, had been lifted in mid-July because the Nationalists knew the Communists "would complain bitterly . . . and we did not want to get world opinion confused."

A Nine-Year Blockade

Here again we were given a glimpse of why enemy possession of the offshore islands is a problem for the mainland. Here the Nationalist Defense Ministry was admitting that Quemoy had been used for 9 years to blockade the port of Amoy, which is as close to Quemoy as New York's port is to Staten Island. But the very next day the Associated Press carried a dispatch from Taipeh (*Wash. Eve. Star*, Oct. 17) which quoted a Nationalist Defense Ministry spokesman as denying that the lifting of the blockade had been announced, though it was admitted that the present cease-fire "enabled Communist craft to sail in and out of Amoy harbor, which the Quemoys previously blockaded."

It would be good to know what the real situation is, and whether cessation of the blockade was to be discussed by Dulles and Chiang on the former's visit to Taipeh. There is reason to doubt the Secretary of State's statement that there had been no blockade activities "in recent months." A dispatch from Taipeh by Tillman Durdin in the *New York Times* of August 10, gave a vivid picture of the blockade and of other aggressive actions by the Nationalists against the mainland. That dispatch tends to support Krishna Menon.

How Our Fleet and Air Force Helps

The Durdin dispatch said that while Communist planes "have rarely ventured" toward Formosa, Nationalist planes had been flying reconnaissance over the adjoining mainland "for years" and regularly "photographing airfields and scrutinizing other military objectives." Transports, covered by fighters, had been dropping leaflets. In the straits, according to Durdin, "The Nationalist Air Force and Navy, backed by ships and planes of the U. S. Seventh Fleet and Taiwan-based U. S. Air Force jets, have kept effective supremacy."

Even Our Independent Minds

On Oct. 16 a group of independents ran an ad in the New York Times calling for a new foreign policy. The signers included persons like Mrs. Roosevelt, Clarence Pickett, Norman Thomas, James P. Warburg, Walter Millis, Erich Fromm, Brig. Gen. Hugh B. Hester, Jay Orear and Freda Kirchwey whom we respect. Yet it is striking to notice that they were unable to agree on a single constructive proposal, especially in regard to the Far Eastern crisis. Here they went no further than to say that "We find ourselves trapped in tight corners where we desperately assume rigid positions that make negotiation virtually impossible."

The biggest trap of all is our unwillingness to recognize Red China or to allow it to be admitted to the UN. To try and stablize the Far East without recognizing China would be like trying to stablize North America without recognizing the USA. Many of those who signed agree with this but could not muster a sufficient majority. It is a danger signal and striking evidence of our unrealistic rigidity as a nation that even independents do not dare say in this country what conservatives say in Britain, Canada and other Western nations.

A sample of this conrast may be found in the recent conference of the British Conservative Party. We quote from the London Times account of Oct. 11, "'But it would be just as well if we said with frankness that it is not only the hysterical voices on the Left who are profoundly disturbed about the position the Americans have got themselves into in the Far East,' Mr. Van Straubenzee said amid cheers. To pretend that the small, discredited rump of China, based on an island which was not essentially part of the mainland, was the duly representative government of China was not to recognize realities. The Communists were the effective government of the mainland, and it would be unwise to leave them 'in outer space.'" The speaker was a key figure at this annual parley. He moved the conference resolution on foreign policy, which was unanimously adopted. Thus Tories cheer in England what liberals cannot bring themselves to utter here.

"As a result," Durdin reported, "Communist shipping between north and south China has been hampered. Aside from small Communist vessels that sneak in and out, the ports of Foochow and Amoy, are served only by other foreign ships."

Durdin Called the Shots Correctly

This *New York Times* dispatch cabled on August 9 from Formosa would seem to deny the truth of the Nationalist announcement of Oct. 16 that the blockade had been lifted in "mid-July" and the Secretary's statement of Oct. 15 that there had been no blockade activities "in recent months."

"In the last two years," the Durdin dispatch concluded, "Peiping has been pushing the economic development of Fukien [the province opposite Formosa] and extending its rail networks. This must be making Nationalist interdictions increasingly irksome and may be bringing nearer the day when the Communists feel they must free their coastline by asserting air control and, possibly, by eliminating the Nationalist grip on Quemoy and Matsu as well."

Thirteen days later, Aug. 23, the shelling of Quemoy began.

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Idiot's Tale Campaign: Ike "Goes Nixon" and Truman Regrets End of Korean War

Why We Would Vote for the Lamont Ticket If We Lived in New York

If we were a resident of New York, we would vote for Corliss Lamont and the United-Independent Socialist Party ticket. We have serious differences with Mr. Lamont and with this new party. But we see no other way to vote for peace, the overriding issue.

Ever since the 1948 campaign, both parties have made it hard for dissenters on the peace issue. The Truman Administration tried to break up the Wallace movement with a whispering campaign that spoke of indictments awaiting the leaders of the Progressive Party.

Big Brother Won't Know

McCarthy, the Senate Internal Security Committee, and the House Un-American Activities Committee joined in. They made it dangerous to sign a peace petition or go to a radical or liberal movement. The FBI, which shares the screwy preconceptions of the witch hunters*, even had snoopers watching organizations as palely pink as World Federalists.

But we still have a secret ballot, and there will be no Big Brothers looking over the shoulders of New York readers who vote the Lamont ticket. They can exercise their freedom unscathed in the ballot box.

We have watched this year's campaign with rising gorge. As we write Ike has gone Nixon on us, claiming at Los Angeles that the Democrats are dominated by "political radicals" (would they were!). Truman at press conference here last week-end indicated that he still seems to think it was unforgivable of the Republicans to call off the Korean war! A Gallup poll in the New York *Herald-Tribune* of Oct. 19 showed that 60 percent of the Republicans and 54 percent of the Democrats reported "little or no interest" in this election. We regard this as heartening evidence of popular intelligence.

Nowhere is the scene more disgusting than in New York. Henry Abrams, chairman of the Lamont ticket campaign committee, was right when he said the major party candidates in New York "by common consent think that the only issues in this campaign are ethnic eating and how best to shake hands."

Nelson Rockefeller has been financing a campaign to sell the idea of limited nuclear war and to fight cessation of nuclear testing through his Rockefeller Brothers Fund and its research man, Henry A. Kissinger. The Rockefeller report last winter talked of the need to prepare the American people psychologically for nuclear war but Rockefeller has kept discreetly mum about these views in the campaign. And Harriman hasn't attacked Rockefeller on them, though this would be political dynamite. Obviously "Ave" agrees with "Rock."

As for the rest of the ticket, Keating is "liberal" only on civil rights where he has to be, and otherwise on civil liberty sees eye to eye with his close friend J. Edgar Hoover. To have the liberal Javits campaigning for the ultra conservative Keating for Senator is as comic as to have Finletter dutifully on the hustings for Carmine de Sapio's handpicked Hogan.

The Tammany Boss De Sapio failed in his effort to keep the Lamont ticket off the ballot. The U.-I. S. people did a back-breaking job in refuting 192 pages of phoney challenges to their election petition. Their victory gives New York a chance to cast a meaningful protest ballot for peace, and in the vote for Lamont to salute a man who did so much in the worst days of McCarthyism to keep alive the fight for civil liberty.

Why Third Parties

"Opening the ballot to more than two alternatives encourages citizen participation in the political process. The right to political dissent becomes nominal and can become dangerous without the steamvalve mechanism of placing minority candidates before the voters. Frustrating legal restrictions can only contribute to disillusionment without democratic ideals."

—"Do Third Parties Have A Chance?" The legal restrictions on them, by Ralph Nader and Theodore Jacobs, Harvard Law Record, Oct. 9, 1958.

***In this connection we heartily recommend the special 64-page issue of The Nation for Oct. 18 which is wholly devoted to Fred J. Cook's masterly survey of the FBI, the best job of its kind since Max Lowenthal's monumental work in 1950.**

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I. F. Stone's Weekly
5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W.
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NEWSPAPER

Entered as Second Class Mail Matter Washington, D. C. Post Office

I. F. Stone's Weekly. Entered as Second Class Matter at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Post-dated Mondays but published every Thursday except the last two Thursdays of August and December at 5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W., Washington 15, D. C. An independent weekly published and edited by I. F. Stone; Circulation Manager, Esther M. Stone. Subscription: $5 in the U. S.; $6 in Canada; $10 elsewhere. Air Mail rates: $15 to Europe; $20 to Israel, Asia and Africa.

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